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BIBLICAL CRITICISM IN RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

THE question whether Biblical criticism is, on the whole, permissible in religious instruction has been in principle long decided. A religious instruction which from the outset rejects all Biblical criticism is no longer possible at the present day. Even the lowest grade of religious teaching, which includes children up to the age of fourteen years, for whom it provides the elements of Biblical knowledge, cannot entirely dispense with Biblical criticism. There are passages in the Holy Writings which are no longer compatible with our conception of God and our idea of morality, and for that reason must be withheld from the scholars of the lower grade. I will mention here, by way of example, the curse in Lev. xxvi. 14 ff. and Deut. xxviii. 15 ff.; further, the cruelties practised during the conquest of Canaan by Joshua (Josh. vi. 21 ff., viii. 24 ff., x. 10 ff., 22 ff.), the events in the time of the Judges which reveal a very low standard of morals, the narrative of the death of Ahaziah (2 Kings i. 9 ff.), the extermination of the house of Omri at the instigation of Elisha (2 Kings x, especially x. 28-30), and so forth, and so forth. When we, in the interest of the training of our youth to morality, simply omit such passages of the Holy Scripture in giving religious instruction, we exercise, although without the knowledge of the scholars, Biblical criticism. We condemn the passages omitted by us, and consider them not calculated

to aid us in the work of education. It is also Biblical criticism, unknown to the pupils, when in the religious instruction of the lower grade we pass over the story of Balaam's ass or some of the miracles of Elisha, because these narratives have neither poetical value nor any special moral worth, and at the same time presuppose a belief in the miraculous which we no longer find even in children from ten to fourteen years of age. In isolated cases, however, the pupils even of this grade must be made conscious of this critical examination of the Holy Scripture if they are to understand certain incidents in the life of Biblical characters. The personality of Elijah, for example, can only win the interest of children from twelve to fourteen years old when his journey to heaven, as related in the Bible, is represented as one of those legends in which a people poetically glorifies the end of its great national heroes, since it cannot conceive their natural death. A comparison with the legend of Barbarossa asleep in the *Kyffhäuser* will bring the whole incident thoroughly home to the pupils, and make the figure of Elijah still dearer and more familiar to them. I cannot see, either, why the narrative of the Book of Jonah shall not be described, even in this grade, as what it really is—a parable, which in the garb of poetry gives expression to one of the most sublime thoughts in the Holy Writings, the belief in God as the loving father of all men, who out of the fullness of his mercy grants forgiveness to his children without regard to their religious belief. And to give yet another instance—must not the Book of Job also be represented to children from thirteen to fourteen years of age as a poem which does not describe actual events, but with splendidly poetical creative power deals with the problem whether, notwithstanding the many injustices which life brings before our eyes, we can still believe in a just God of the universe?

These examples may suffice. They should prove that even in the lowest grade of religious instruction, that is, in the case of children up to fourteen years—this grade includes

the pupils of the elementary schools and of the lower classes of the secondary schools—it is impossible to refrain entirely from Biblical criticism. On the whole, Biblical criticism is here *passive* for the scholar; the teacher omits at his own discretion¹ those elements in the Bible which stand in contradiction to our views at the present day, and so offers to the school Biblical history in a considerably abridged form. Only in the case of the examples cited above, Elijah, Jonah, Job, and the like, is Biblical criticism *active* for the scholar also; he becomes aware that not all the events described in the Bible have actually taken place; he learns to distinguish between poetry and reality, between legend and history. But this active participation of twelve to fourteen year old children in the critical examination of the Bible may only be exercised in isolated cases, the choice of which must be left to the tact and skill of the teacher. A *systematic* criticism of the Bible at this stage of the religious instruction would be quite absurd, and would greatly jeopardize the results. For, on the one hand, children of fourteen years of age and under have not the ripeness of mind to be able to understand and judge critically a work like the Bible as a whole; and, on the other hand, they master the subject-matter too insufficiently to be in a position to give it a general critical survey. Systematic criticism of the Bible pre-supposes maturity of mind and thoroughness of knowledge; where both conditions fail such criticism is out of the question. Therefore the aim of the religious teaching of the lower grade must be above all to give the pupils, with the help of a good Bible history, the knowledge of the most important parts of the Bible. The pupils of this grade must be so far advanced that every significant moment and important event in Biblical history, from the creation of the world to the end of the Biblical period, is familiar and also comprehensible to them. And not only

¹ Uniform action in this respect is certainly desirable.

that! The most important legal principles, moral lessons, and social precepts of the Pentateuch, as well as the greatest utterances of our Prophets (of the latter I mention Amos v. 15, 21-24; vii. 7-9; Hos. ii. 21, 22; vi. 4-6; xiv. 2-4; xi. 7-9; Isa. vi.; i. 1-20; v. 1-7; ii. 2-4; xi. 1-9; Mic. vi. 2-8; Jer. i. 7, 9-14; xxii. 13-19; xxix; xxxi. 15-20, 31-37; Ezek. xviii. 2-9; xxxiii. 10-11; xxxvii. 12-14, 26, 27; Is. II. xl. 8-26; xliv. 12-20; lviii. 2-8; lvi. 3, 6, 7, &c.), the finest Psalms and passages such as Job xxxi, must be read with reference to one another by the twelve to fourteen year old children in a special school Bible, then discussed in class, and partly also committed to memory. In a word, the lower grade must advance the pupils so far that they have a thorough mastery of the contents of the Bible in its essential parts; it must lay the foundation on which the work can be carried on further in the secondary schools.

What the lower grade has thus prepared the intermediate grade then continues. To this belong boys from fourteen to sixteen years, who are to be found in the middle classes of our public schools. They are so far grounded through the previous instruction that they can engage more deeply in the study of the Bible, and with increasing maturity of mind are in a position also to form a critical estimation of it. For subject-matter the Prophets and the most important of the Hagiographa are available; as sole textbook there is the school Bible. And now is the time when the really critical treatment of the Bible begins. It is true that even at this stage a *systematic* Biblical criticism is out of the question, but, nevertheless, important questions relating to Biblical criticism are discussed in detail, thus effectively preparing the way for the systematic treatment of the material in the upper grade. In the foreground of the interest in the treatment of the Prophets are the question of verbal inspiration and the *evolution* of religious thought in Judaism from Amos to Malachi. So far as it is necessary for the comprehension of the whole, the date of the

separate books and the chronological order of the single chapters are drawn into the circle of discussion. The chief thing is that the scholars of this grade must learn to recognize that *the Jewish religion is of gradual growth; it has slowly developed in the course of centuries.* This principle holds good also in the treatment of the Hagio-grapha; in them also, therefore, the centre of gravity is to be found in the ideas expressed in the separate writings.

Before then the prophetic books are discussed in class, the scholars must first be shown, by an introductory survey with reference to the remarkable passages 2 Kings ix. 11 and 1 Sam. x. 10 f., in connexion with 1 Sam. ix. 6-10 and 1 Kings xiv. 2 ff., that prophecy in Israel also only gradually developed. The seers of antiquity, prophesying in an ecstatic condition for money, have so little in common with the mighty preachers of morality of the eighth and seventh centuries, that Amos (vii. 14) even puts himself in conscious opposition to those soothsaying prophets. Here also, therefore, is the development from the lowest to the highest. When this is realized, the nature of the revelation must also be established. The scholars must be clear on this point, whether the belief in a verbal inspiration can be maintained, or whether it is not rather to be replaced by an idea more in accordance with our modern thought: by a comparison of the prophetic soul with that of the poet. This is best illustrated by a concrete example, and the most effective example has been given to us by Prof. Moritz Lazarus in his excellent essay on the prophet Jeremiah, an example to which I constantly refer my pupils, in order to put before their minds the exalted nature of prophetic inspiration, in a manner consistent with our modern views and as impressively as possible. I reproduce here, word for word, the call of Jeremiah (Jer. i) as represented by Lazarus: "Jeremiah is very young—a נער. When he feels himself called to come forward as a prophet, a conversation takes place between him and God. It is the earnest reflection in his heart:

Canst thou do it? 'I am still young and cannot speak', he says. He is very young then. But nevertheless his heart is already full of the thoughts which he has to make known. We can imagine that he has chosen to occupy his early years with reading the old prophets, Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Micah, so far as they were accessible to him. . . . Thus the doings of the prophets sound legendary to him. He feels himself the more urged to come forward as prophet. And now his prophetic thoughts constantly take form and hover about him. He goes out into the open air. He sees an almond tree. The almond tree is called in Hebrew the 'tree of Awakening.' A beautiful name: the almond blossom is the first to open in the Spring. Nature awakens with this blossom of the almond tree; therefore it is called the tree of awakening. So when he now sees the form of the tree, he must think of the idea of awakening and being awake; and at the same time also of the prophetic exhortation; in the picture he sees, he hears God's promise: 'I will *watch* over my resolution, to fulfil it.' And involuntarily he must think further: 'That is it! That is what it means!' and he hears in this the voice of God, 'Thou hast well seen!' And such a process is repeated. Whatever he beholds is transformed in his own thoughts." Such is Lazarus's representation of the call of Jeremiah. I have found that it offers to the students a substitute for the untenable belief in a verbal inspiration, which affords them the greatest satisfaction: they recognize the relationship of the prophetic soul with that of the artist; they divine that in both the same revelation takes place.

When the students have thus grasped the nature of prophecy, the discussion of the separate prophets can be begun. I will explain, taking Isaiah as an example, how this discussion must be conducted by critical methods. In the first place, all those passages must be omitted which, according to the established results of scientific inquiry, are not to be attributed to Isaiah. I reckon among these,

in addition to the second Isaiah, chapters xiii, xiv. 1-23, xxi, xxiv-xxvii, and xxxiv. The remaining chapters are read according to choice in the school Bible, and are discussed in detail during the lessons. For this method of treatment, the following order almost inevitably results: first, chapter vi as the Chapter of the Call. In the discussion of this chapter the leading ideas of the prophet are brought out: God as the Holy One will by word and example of his prophet train also sinful men to holiness. But the majority are not equal to the task, they go to destruction through their moral weakness.

Only a small remnant is left over, which is to be the bearer of the coming salvation; out of it grows the future community of the pious. Chapters i-v and ix-xii are then read and discussed; they form as it were the commentary to the leading ideas in the Chapter of the Call, and give the students an extraordinarily clear picture of the prophet's moral view of life. The students must be made to understand, however, the political activity of Isaiah also. For it is really nothing else than a transference of his moral and religious ideas to the sphere of politics. Judah may not perish; a remnant must be left as holy seed. For that reason God delivers his righteous from the power of their enemies. Steadfast trust in God is then what the prophet requires of his people. To illustrate these thoughts, chapters vii-ix. 6 (dating from the time of the war of Syria and Ephraim) should be read in particular, and then, with constant reference to the corresponding political events, in chronological order chapters xxviii (dating from about the year 724), xx (from about the year 711), xviii, xxix, xxx, and xxxiii (about 705)¹, as a complement to which chapters xviii and xix of 2 Kings should be added. In this way the students get a clear view of the character of Isaiah. They learn to understand and estimate the surpassing influence of this

¹ I give here the dates which are unanimously recognized by investigators as correct for the separate prophetic utterances.

extraordinary man on the whole public life of his time and on the moral and religious views of future races also. This object can only be attained, however, if the utterances of Isaiah are analysed, read, and discussed in the above indicated manner. I have always found that such an earnest, critical treatment not only makes the students alive to the greatness of our prophets, but also causes them especially to like and value the instruction in this part of the subject. The rest of the prophets are now treated in a similar way. Next in importance and interest stand Amos, Hosea, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the second Isaiah. The chief object is to make the students recognize that our prophets have given to the world the highest religious conceptions. Starting from Amos, who did away with the idea of the national God and created the conception of the just God of the Universe, the way leads past Hosea, who teaches of the God of love; past Isaiah, who preaches the holiness of God as a model for mankind; and past Jeremiah, who represents the devout heart of the individual as the ideal of Religion, to the second Isaiah, who speaks in the name of him whom he extols as the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth. Thus the students learn to grasp the ethical monotheism of our prophets. They recognize in the belief of the prophets, "the belief in the moral order of the world, in the validity of righteousness as the highest law for the whole world" (Wellh., *Isr. u. jüd. Gesch.*, p. 113). The prophets become for them men who "although a product of their time, rise to a level of thought which holds good for all time . . . and who know that their work is not for the present" (loc. cit., p. 113). Of course, while these ideas are being traced in the prophetic writings, comparison is constantly made also with the moral lessons, principles of justice and social precepts in the Pentateuch, which have already been discussed and partly committed to memory in the lower grade. The students in this way obtain gradually a definite store of moral and religious ideas, which they

have drawn from the Bible, and which make the Bible valued by and dear to them.

After the prophets have been thus treated critically and recognized by the students as the transmitters of great and eternal ideas, the most important of the Hagiographa, also from a critical point of view, are discussed in detail. The first to be taken into consideration are the historical writings, Ezra and Nehemiah, which must be taken through in immediate connexion with Ezekiel, since, in a certain sense, they continue the train of thought of this prophet. Ezekiel is the creator of the religious community, Ezra and Nehemiah gave this community solidity by the subjection of the people to the law. With unbending severity they removed from it all heathen influences. They are the "definite organizers of Judaism" (Wellh., *Isr. u. jüd. Gesch.*, p. 177). This fact justifies the discussion of the books Ezra and Nehemiah in the religious classes of the middle grade immediately after the prophecies of Ezekiel. The two books of Chronicles, however, are not dealt with at this stage. There is no new matter to be obtained from them, and the biased representation of the history of the regal period, as it is set forth in Chronicles, cannot be offered to the students of the middle grade. For a sound judgment on the origin of this kind of historical writing and on the circumstances under which it arises can only be formed by the students when they have arrived at a clear general view of the whole ground of the Biblical writings, in accordance with the present position of the science of Biblical criticism. This, however, the religious instruction of the upper grade only can offer them. On the other hand, in the middle grade, in addition to Ezra and Nehemiah, the two books Jonah and Ruth must be discussed critically, the former from the so-called twelve minor prophets, and explained as literary products of the post-exilic period, in which once again the old prophetic spirit stirs, to raise a conscious protest against the severe separative measures of the school of Ezra. In this con-

nexion only do the students learn to understand rightly the great value of the two small books as regards the history of religion. The book of Daniel is also treated in a critical manner in this grade, being referred, according to the universally accepted results of scientific inquiry, to the time of the Maccabean struggle, in which it was composed as a book of consolation, to inspire with courage the Jews fighting with all their strength for their national and religious existence. Only by such a method of treatment is it possible to interest the students very greatly in the book of Daniel, which would otherwise be quite incomprehensible. In the case of the other books of the Hagiographa also, especially as far as their date is in question, considerations of Biblical criticism arise throughout. It is doubtful whether these considerations should have weight also in the treatment of the books in question in the religious instruction of the middle grade. In the case of the Psalms, for example, mention may certainly be made of the fact that notwithstanding the superscriptions, not a single psalm can be positively ascribed to David; nay, even that most of these songs probably only came into existence in the post-exilic period, but too much weight must not be attached to this question. For ultimately, as far as the religious effect of the Psalms is concerned, it is a matter of no importance who composed them; they remain gems of devotional poetry, whether they came into existence before, during, or after the Exile. It would be quite absurd, in dealing with single psalms in the school, to discuss the date of their composition. These are special questions which do not come within the scope of religious instruction. The same applies to the Proverbs of Solomon and Koheleth. It may perhaps be pointed out in the case of these also, that they were not composed by him to whom the Bible attributes them, but here also more than this is not desirable. The religious instruction must not become a battle-ground for the hypotheses of religious science. For the same reason, in the treatment of the Book of Job,

we should object to a discussion of the question whether the speeches of Elihu were part of the original work, or a later interpolation. That would be in fact to go far beyond the limits of the school, and to enter on foreign ground without heightening thereby the students' appreciation of the religious and poetic value of the book. The delight which the poem gives us is not affected by the genuineness or spuriousness of the speeches of Elihu, nor is the consistency of the whole imperilled. In other words, Biblical criticism in religious instruction must be exercised with prudence. It must not be an end in itself, but must always remain the means to an end. It should always be taken into consideration where it seems necessary for a more intimate understanding of the Biblical writings (cf. the above-cited examples), but where the intellectual, ethical, or poetical worth of a book of the Bible can be perceived without a critical examination, it must always be avoided. This applies not only to the middle but also to the upper grade of religious teaching.

This upper grade includes the higher classes of our secondary schools, that is to say, young people of from sixteen to nineteen years of age, until their entrance on their University course. These students are so advanced by the previous instruction that they have mastered the subject-matter of the Bible in its most essential parts; moreover, the critical examination of the Prophets and separate books of the Hagiographa has made them realize the importance of Biblical criticism for the just appreciation of the holy writings.

Thus the foundation is laid on which the work in hand can be brought to a temporary conclusion. The upper grade completes what the other two grades have prepared: it gives a connected and comprehensive picture of the gradual production of the Biblical writings from the earliest time to the composition of Chronicles, it draws the separate elements of the Pentateuch into the circle of its discussion, and points out the characteristic signs of these elements.

In a word, it presents a systematic criticism of the Bible. This is the more feasible, since the students of this grade possess not only the earnestness in study but also the maturity of mind necessary for such a method of considering the Bible. The school Bible, of course, no longer suffices as a textbook; it must be replaced by a good unabridged edition of the Holy Scripture (naturally not in the original, but in the vernacular).

Now the principal question can be raised: What is to be gained by such a treatment of the Bible in the upper classes of our public schools? Is the value of the Biblical writings heightened by it in the eyes of the students, or is there not perhaps rather a danger that, through the critical analysis of the separate books, the whole may lose its elevated character, and the religious idea generally be prejudiced? I consider the question important enough to discuss it somewhat fully. From the outset we must reject the idea that the critical and scientific discussion of a book, so important and so rich in contents, could endanger its real value. Earnest scholarly labour has never yet injured a great literary work; rather does it constantly help to elucidate and make more effective the difficult passages of the work as well as its beauties. This applies to all instruction in the upper classes of our secondary schools in literature and the history of civilization; this applies also to the critical treatment of the Bible. Those of a contrary opinion do not seem to value very highly the intrinsic worth of the Biblical books; otherwise they would allow the religious and moral ideas which we draw from the Holy Writings, at least so much virtue as to be able to stand critical examination. Since, therefore, the principal objections to systematic criticism of the Bible in the upper grade are disposed of, the critical study of the Bible in this grade *must*, in my opinion, be carried on systematically and brought to a temporary conclusion, for urgent reasons both external and internal.

First, the external reasons. Already a purely scientific

interest is aroused. When once the critical treatment of the Prophets in the middle grade—and I think that I have pointed out that no other treatment is possible in this grade—has awakened understanding and appreciation of the critical consideration of the Bible generally, we cannot stop half-way. What is begun must be carried to a conclusion. I believe also that the natural interest of the students themselves will make the completion desirable. For he who once knows that the prophetic books are not each from one hand only, will ultimately recognize that the same is the case with other books of the Holy Scripture. And from this recognition will arise the desire to receive information also on the origin of the Pentateuch, and the gradual development of the religious ideas contained in it. But even where this is not the case the obligation remains of further critical instruction in it. For it is supremely to our interest that those who throughout their whole course of education are destined to undertake one day the spiritual guidance of our community should form a clear judgment on the value and significance of the book which we have given to the civilized world as our greatest treasure, the Bible. Every educated Christian is instructed to-day in the history of the Biblical writings, and should we Jews be inferior to men of another faith in the knowledge of our own peculiar treasure? Long enough have we been obliged to submit to this just reproach. It is high time for us to remove the cause of it.

Weightier still than the external reasons, seem to me the internal reasons for the systematic completion of the critical instruction in the upper grade. Above all, the following: Any outsider who carefully reads the Holy Scripture is struck by the many repetitions, contradictions, and inconsistencies in the Bible. These repetitions, contradictions, and inconsistencies are at once comprehensible on a critical examination of the Biblical text. The reader learns to take them for what they are: the natural result of a fusion into one uniform whole of the separate elements of the Biblical

writings which came into existence at different periods of time. And what is unavoidable in every work put together in this fashion appears in the Bible also ; it cannot but show traces of its gradual formation. To impress this character on the minds of the maturer students in the interest of the just estimation of the Holy Scriptures is, however, the chief object of the critical instruction in the Bible imparted to the upper grade. This object cannot be considered of too much importance. I said above that it made no difference to the religious effect of a psalm in what period it was composed, and I say so again ; but in judging the Bible as regards literature and the history of religion, it is by no means indifferent, whether we calmly accept the contradictions, inconsistencies, and repetitions contained in it, and thereby naturally lower the value of the Biblical books, or whether we by earnest critical examination seek to understand these peculiarities and overcome the difficulties. Every objective thinker must admit that the latter way is the only practicable and suitable one to obtain a just appreciation of the Bible. And if we gain this object in the case of the students of the higher grade by means of critical instruction in the Bible, we may, I think, congratulate ourselves on the results. Who could dispute, moreover, that the critical treatment of the Biblical writings leads also to a deeper understanding of the poetical beauties which constantly call forth our admiration in different sections of the Holy Scripture. The high poetical value—to cite only one example—of the naïve accounts of the Jahvist can only by a critical method be plainly revealed to the students. This applies also to the gradual development of the Jewish conception of God. Only a critical estimation of the Biblical books enables us to understand the gradual passage of the Jewish conception of God from the depths of the anthropomorphic views of primitive times to the splendid heights of the ethical monotheism of our prophets. These are, I think, considerations which show that the completion of the critical instruction in the Bible

in the upper classes of our public schools is really an urgent necessity. No more is needed for its justification ; only on its extent, on the limits which must be assigned to it, and beyond which it must not go, are a few remarks still to be made. This above all : the critical teaching of the Bible in schools must never aim at critical hair-splitting, because the student is not equal to it ; nor may it lose itself in trifling peculiarities, which are of importance to the investigator but only perplex the student. Also, it cannot be often enough or sharply enough emphasized that the school is only concerned with giving a clear general idea of the development in accordance with the undisputed results of inquiry. Only what has already found general recognition in the authoritative scientific world may be regarded.

After these general remarks, I will now sketch briefly the range of the subject-matter and the manner of its treatment in the upper grade. First, the position of Moses towards the Pentateuch must be discussed before the students, and then it is, I think, best to admit without reserve from the outset, that we can no longer state with certainty whether the Pentateuch comes directly from Moses, or what portions of it are due to him. One point, however, must remain beyond all doubt, that Moses, as the deliverer of Israel from the yoke of Egypt, gave his people their belief in Jehovah, the God of Israel. On what do we base this view before the students ? On facts handed down by tradition. Kautzsch rightly observes in his *Abriss der Geschichte des alttestamentlichen Schrifttums* : " No nation has ever said of itself without reason that it had been ignominiously enslaved by another nation, none has ever forgotten the days of its deliverance. And so for all time the memory endured in Israel that once they were led out by Jehovah, the God of their fathers, with strong hand and stretched out arm from Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that it was specially on their passage through the Red Sea that they felt the mighty protection of their

God. As His instrument, however, Jehovah had made use of a man, whose like was never found again. He had taught his people to consider it their greatest pride to be called the people of *this God*, their greatest joy to extol Him and honour Him with sacrifices and gifts." I think the position assigned to Moses by such a conception of history is one so important, that the mighty personality of this matchless leader of his nation loses none of its glory thereby. After this explanation those poetical passages out of the Holy Writings must be read which, in accordance with the universal judgment of all investigators, must be considered the oldest parts of the Bible. I mention here the song of Deborah and the parable of Jotham in the time of the Judges, David's lament over Saul and Jonathan, as well as his lament over Abner, and the parable of Nathan in the time of David; further, the blessing of Jacob and the utterances of Balaam, which, according to the prevailing view, date from the age of Solomon. Reference must also be made to the Book of the Wars of Jehovah (Num. xxi. 14) and the Book of the Righteous (Josh. x. 12 f. and 2 Sam. i. 18), which, as older sources, likewise belong to this period. Then the "Book of the Covenant" (Exod. xxi-xxiii), taken down in writing in about 850, is discussed more particularly, as it contains the codified moral lessons and rights founded upon the custom of that time. And now come the two great sources, which stand out in the Pentateuch and in Joshua, and relate primitive Biblical history: the Jahvist, dating from the ninth century before the Christian era, and the Elohist, which was composed about a century later. Of course, in the discussion of these sources time must not be wasted on isolated facts. The instruction must only give a general view. After the names of the sources have been explained, reference must be made first of all to their especial characteristics; in the Jahvist to the naïve unaffectedness and plain simplicity displayed in the narratives. The fall of man, the visit of the angels to Abraham

in the grove of Mamre, the destruction of Sodom, the journey of Eliezer to Mesopotamia, the suing for the hand of Rebecca, and, finally, the second journey of Joseph's brothers to Egypt, in the Jahvistic representation of them, work on the reader so much by the natural, unaffected manner in which the subject-matter is treated that they must be read by the students as delightful examples of the Jahvistic narratives. At the same time, it must be emphasized that the representation of God in the Jahvistic source is not yet quite free from anthropomorphism (cf. Gen. ii, iii, xviii ; xxxii. 24 ff., and the passage J.E. in Exod. xxiv. 9 ff.). Nevertheless the conception of God and the moral point of view of the Jahvist may in general be rightly described as on a high level of civilization. The chief thing to be noted in the Elohist is that its conception of God is already essentially more abstract. Also, "in externals it gives its narratives a more religious stamp" (Cornill, *Einkl. in das A. T.*, p. 47). To illustrate this difference the example mentioned by Cornill, l. c., E., Gen. xx. 1-17, xxi. 22-32, should be compared in the school with the parallel narrative of J., Gen. xxvi. 1-33. For passages in J. and E. relating to the Law, the two versions of the Decalogue, Exod. xxxiv. 10-26 (already designated by Goethe as the older Decalogue) and Exod. xx. 2-17 must be read and discussed.

The third element of the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy, which was found in the year 621 in the reign of Josiah during some repairs to the temple, has now to be dealt with. It seems necessary, however, first to consider again the value of the religious ideas of the prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah, who were active in the period between the rise of J. and E. and the discovery of D., and who have been already discussed in the middle grade. In this way only do the students rightly understand the continuity of the whole. In the treatment of Deuteronomy, inquiry into the extent of the original Deuteronomy is of course to be deprecated as much as would be, in the

discussion of J. and E., the division into J. and J¹. or E. and E¹. Here, also, there can really be only a general view of the whole. The following must be noticed above all as characteristic signs of Deuteronomy—the centralization of the worship of God, commanded in chapter xii, which was to lead to a decided change in the religious life of the Jews, then the command for the obliteration of all heathen elements from the service of Jehovah (cf. chap. xii. 29 ff., xiii. 17 ff.), the celebration of the festivals in the central sanctuary in Jerusalem (chap. xvi), and, consequent on the centralization, the transference of the priests of the high places to the capital. The reasons also of these proceedings must be discussed; it was desired to put a stop to the crime of idol worship, which was no doubt carried on in many local sanctuaries; the conditions which were prevalent, especially in the reign of Manasseh, had produced Deuteronomy. It was hoped that by declaring in Deuteronomy the worship in the high places to be unlawful, the recurrence of the disgraceful conditions which were quite usual under the son of Hezekiah might be prevented for ever. Further, light must be thrown on the relation between the former priests of the high places and their colleagues in Jerusalem. Reference must be made to the fact that D. prepares the way for the distinction between priests and Levites, which is strictly carried out in P. Finally, attention must also be called to the prophetic spirit, which is revealed in numerous passages of Deuteronomy and especially in chapters vi. 4–9, x. 12 ff., xxiii. 16, 17, and xxiv. 6 ff., finds splendid expression. In immediate connexion with D., the book of Jeremiah must then be again discussed with the students, because it proves how little popular the religious reforms of Josiah had become. Idolatry with all its base customs were again flourishing (Jer. vii. 6–9, xvii. f.), and the people had no idea of conversion. Therefore Jeremiah foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the course of events proved him in the right. The year 586 was the year of the fall of the

national independence of Judea; the flower of the nation wandered into exile in Babylon. During the exile, however, the prophet worked whom Wellhausen appropriately calls "the connecting link between Prophecy and Law" (*Prol.*, p. 427): Ezekiel. His religious ideas have already been discussed in the middle grade. The repetition of them in the upper grade is nevertheless the more imperative, because only through Ezekiel does the way from D. to P. become comprehensible. Chapters xl to xlviii need not even be read. A short summary of their contents is enough. The students must certainly learn to know the text of xliv. 9 ff., because it is in this passage that the strict distinction between priests and Levites, for which D. laid the foundation, was extraordinarily emphasized. In connexion with Ezekiel, the fusion of J., E., and D., which may have taken place in this period, may now be mentioned. Also the revision and conclusion of the historical work which begins with the death of Joshua and ends with the liberation of the captive Jehochin (Judges, 1 and 2 Sam., 1 and 2 Kings), must be brought forward here as an achievement of the Babylonian exile. Although time would not admit of a more detailed discussion of the books in question, a short description of the religious pragmatism prevailing in them would not be out of place.

As a connecting link between Ezekiel and P., the Holiness Code (Lev. xvii-xxvi), dating from about 550, deserves close consideration in the school if only for the sake of its contents. In it "the moral ideas of the Prophets and their conception of religion operate very powerfully. . . . Above all it shows that from the holiness of Jehovah, ethical commands are derived and religious customs are turned to humanitarian ends, above all that righteous ethical conduct is derived from a righteous heart, and this results from religion; cf. Lev. xix. 15-18, especially verse 18: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, I am the Lord'" (Stade, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments*, p. 301).

Before the continuation of the Holiness Code in P. is described, the "great unknown" of the Babylonian exile must now again be mentioned, of whom Cornill rightly says in his *Israelitischer Prophetismus*, p. 131: "He must in many respects be considered the most brilliant jewel of the prophetic literature. All the great and noble ideas of the prophecy before his time are gathered together in him as in one focus, and he gives them out with the most charming refraction and the most wonderful play of light and colour: for he is an artist of form of the first rank, a master of language and diction, with few to equal him."

And now, as the coping-stone of the development of the history of religion in the Pentateuch, the Priestly Code! This requires a particularly thorough discussion before the students, since it entirely does away with the earlier representations of the origin of the five books of Moses. It must first be pointed out that P. is identical with the book of the Law brought from Babylon by Ezra in the year 458, to which the community was solemnly pledged in the year 444. Later, about 400, it was blended in the Pentateuch with J., E., and D. into one book. Of course all the parts of the five books of Moses belonging to P. cannot be treated in the school-lessons. It must suffice to observe generally that the whole of the third book, with the exception of the Law of Holiness, which may nevertheless be regarded as the first element of P., further numerous chapters of the fourth book, many paragraphs from the first and second books, and finally, isolated passages of the fifth book are recognized undoubtedly as part of P. In the first book, the story of the Creation (chap. i to ii. 4 b) should be especially mentioned.

The students must understand that the religious ideas set forth in P. are the conclusion of the religious views unfolded in D: and Ezekiel. It is essential to emphasize the fact that the centralization of the worship of God, which is commanded in D. as something quite new, already appears in P. as a matter of course. The central

sanctuary in Jerusalem has here its prototype in the tabernacle. "The tabernacle, about which all the pre-exilic literature is silent, . . . is only a projection of the central sanctuary of Deuteronomy, that is, of the temple of Solomon, into the Mosaic period" (Cornill, *Einl. in das A. T.*, p. 63). The position of the priests has become quite different. The separation between priests and Levites introduced in D. and continued by Ezekiel is represented in P. as quite a matter of course, having already been instituted by Moses; the High Priest appears invested with princely authority as the head of the divine community. The priests, who formerly discharged their duties as royal officials, have now become the first men in the state. Worldly power has been displaced by spiritual power. The festivals have lost all their old signification as harvest festivals; they are celebrated because Jehovah has commanded it. The sacrifices also have been changed; instead of the old meal-offerings, which now recede quite into the background, appear burnt-offerings and sin-offerings; the reconciliation of the individual and the community with Jehovah is effected by sacrifice. Even the ground is sacred to Jehovah, and this thought finds expression in the celebration of the Sabbath and the jubilee year. Thus the Priestly Code created the divine state, the self-contained religious community, Judaism. "It gives the final result of the development in the national religion under the influence of circumstances and the Prophets from the destruction of Samaria and the time of Isaiah. It is the product of the prophetic regulation of worship which began in the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, increased very greatly during the exile, and triumphed after the exile. It goes past Ezekiel back to Deuteronomy. It takes the last step, Deuteronomy the first" (Wellh., *Isr. u. jüd. Gesch.*, p. 184). In this way must the character of P. be illustrated before the students, and the description supported by the corresponding scriptural passages. Finally, the manner of representation peculiar to the Priestly Code must be sketched,

above all, its efforts to make the conception of the deity as abstract as possible, and to avoid all anthropomorphism; then its external characteristics—the passion for giving an exact date for every fact, the enumeration of many pedigrees, the exact statement of number and measure, and so forth, peculiarities which make it possible even for those who are less expert to recognize parts of P. in the five books of Moses. Finally, it must be pointed out to the student that P. can only have been composed during the Babylonian exile, since none of the pre-exilic literature betrays any idea of its existence (cf. especially Jer. vii. 22). It is quite impossible that the prophets and priests could have overlooked a work of such supreme importance. Thus the students learn to recognize what the Priestly Code really is, a product of the development from Deuteronomy to Ezra, formed to protect the divine community from decay. And by such a conception they learn also to estimate its value. They will learn to make the judgment of Wellhausen their own: “The prophetic ideas did not give the means for the foundation of a community; on the contrary, they themselves needed a support that they might not be lost to the world. The law provided this support; out of originally heathen material a coat of mail of monotheism was forged. . . . Poetry suffered, but morality freed and elevated itself. . . . The sublime consequences of the discipline to which the Jews submitted themselves must not be overlooked. . . . In the chaos of the empire of the world, in which nations and also religion and morality melted away, they stood firm as a rock in the sea” (Wellh., *Isr. u. jüd. Gesch.*, pp. 189 f. and 207). I think that we may be satisfied if the students arrive at such a conclusion by themselves; Biblical criticism, however, is the path which must lead to this end.

Finally, I must remark that in connexion with P. the two books of Chronicles also must be discussed in the lessons, and especially characteristic passages must be compared with the parallel narratives in the books of

Samuel and Kings. The students then learn to recognize in Chronicles an historical work which applies the views of P. to the events of earlier centuries, and arbitrarily remoulds the matter handed down to them to suit these. "The favoured transmitters of the national history are holy, and the history must be entirely edifying, and especially display the pragmatism of a just, divine rule. . . . What is not fitting in this religious pragmatism is passed over in silence" (Cornill, *Einkl. in das A. T.*, p. 273). It must be pointed out, however, to the students that this kind of historical writing is not necessarily conscious falsification. We may rather suppose that the chronicler borrowed unchanged from the authorities cited by him matter which had already a bias, for the reason that in this form it corresponded best to his views. One thing the students must certainly realize—the work is not a historical authority.

With the discussion of Chronicles the critical consideration of the Bible closes. All the subject-matter to be treated in the upper grade, the extent of which I have sketched above, occupies a course of three years. Only in such a period of time, and only when lower and middle grades have prepared the way in the manner I have indicated, is it possible to attain the desired object. And it *is* possible. I myself have for a number of years given instruction in this way, and it is with satisfaction that I state that the results may be described not only as good, but even as excellent. The students have accepted with earnestness the subject-matter put before them, and have applied themselves to it with understanding. I myself also take a great interest in the work of instruction, especially in the upper grade, and value it very highly. Nor have I up to the present day observed any injurious by-effects.

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BIELEFELD.